

## GOSPEL-DRIVEN ENDURANCE

2 Timothy 2:1-13

Today we're talking about **gospel-driven endurance**. This text has ministered to me in a number of ways this week. **I needed this in light of my ridiculous schedule – slap me or pray for me. But I've also prayed through it for you, as well.... I'm sure many of you need to hear this message for a variety of reasons.**

Who Needs to Hear this?

**Ministers.** For young ministers, the statistics about the likelihood of you making it to the end aren't good. So I pray this will help you as you prepare for a **marathon ministry**. I've seen **many casualties** due to *pride, despair, moral failure, and just the hardship of ministry*. Prepare to endure. **But every minister is always a target of the enemy** and therefore must always be ready to endure hardship.

- **I remember Rick Warren talking to me about endurance, that his whole ministry has been both hardship and joy at the same time. Rarely was it always a "good season" or always a "hard season." He talked about Purpose Driven Life and his wife having cancer at the same time. It was the best of times and worst of times.**
- **My friend Winfeld said that last week "he got punched in the gut" by a guy in the church (metaphorically) but had the most incredible worship experience, seeing people come to Jesus. Once again, hardship and happiness together.**
- **I've experienced this. The greatest times of our ministry have been mingled with hardship.**
- 
- **Ministry is not for the faint of heart. Sometimes Joshua says, "I want to preach, and I want an office." I think he thinks nothing really happens outside of Sunday! What pictures come into your mind when you think of Christian ministry? Do you view vocational ministry as a comfortable, **inside job that does not require sweat or heavy lifting?** Have you ever thought of pastors as spiritual**

athletes? How about spiritual green berets. That's the images here in this chapter.

- o *Along with this, many young churches don't endure either.*

Many church plants don't make it.

**Married Couples.** We have an enemy, who wants to destroy marriages. I pray that you have a marathon marriage.

**Young Believers.** The statistics of those who continue in the church after high school isn't good. I pray that you'll endure.

**New Believers.** Perhaps, you're new to the faith. **Becoming a Christian doesn't mean that it'll be easy.** My dad after becoming a Christian has lost his mother, his sister-in-law, and a friend who was like a big brother, plus his job that he had for 34 years. He said, 2012 has been a bad year.

We all need to aspire to a life of faithfulness. The Christian life isn't about big events, or being famous, it's about a life of steady faithfulness. We need what Eugene Peterson calls "**A long obedience in the same direction.**" As a minister, in a marriage, as a young believer, as a new believer – set out for a marathon.

**Struggling Christians.** The Christian life is war. We must learn to endure. Hebrews 11 shows us a picture of flawed saints, who lived by grace and faith, and endured to the end. We must do the same.

### **Paul to Timothy**

Paul models endurance for us in 2 Timothy. He writes this letter from a prison. He's an aged, war-torn apostle, but he's enduring until the end. He is calling Timothy to endure to the end. Notice **verse 3, verse 10, and verse 12.**

He gives three images to illustrate: "a good soldier," "an athlete," and "a hard working farmer" (2:3-6).

**What was Timothy dealing with?** He was the pastor of a church filled with problems. **See in the old days, churches used to have problems. I'm glad we don't any more! Right.**

- He was criticized for his youth (“I have socks as old as you are, which was another way of saying, “who is this little pipsqueak.” We want someone with experience).
- Many were probably jealous of him.
- Some probably compared him with others.

### **Gospel-Driven Endurance**

In addition to these images, we should also pay attention to the continued emphasis on *the gospel* in 2 Timothy, which illustrates why ministry demands all we have (cf. 2:8-9; 1:8, 12).

**Because of the importance of preserving and passing on the gospel, we must endure; and because of the hope we have in the gospel, we can endure.**

Let me give you **four challenges for gospel-centered endurance**:

### **CHALLENGE #1: LIVE ON THE GOSPEL (2:1)**

Paul begins his exhortation to Timothy by alluding to the his **previous examples of the defectors in Asia and Onesiphorus’** terrific exception. In light of these, Timothy is “**you then**” to resist the trend of the former and instead follow the example of the latter.

If he is to endure, it will be because he is “**strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus**” (2:1). Let this sink in. **Doesn’t this sound good?** How many of you could use some “strength that is in Christ Jesus.”

**Paul urges Timothy to live on the gospel, that is, the enabling grace that flows from our union with Jesus**. Paul does not tell Timothy simply “be strong” or “pull yourself up by your bootstraps.” **That is of no help**. He tells him “to be inwardly strengthened by the grace that is in Christ.” The grace of Christ empowers all of the exhortations of chapter 2. We cannot live out these charges apart from *his* strength.

One of the *refreshing things I find in the life and writing of Paul is his constant emphasis on grace*. (2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:10).

Interestingly, the only description we have of Paul's physical appearance is from the (non-inspired) book *Acts of Paul and Thecla* written in the second century. In this account, Onesiphorus is said to be looking for Paul based upon the description given to him by Titus, portraying the apostle as "**small in size, bald-headed, bandy-legged, well-built, with eyebrows meeting, rather long nose, full of grace**" (Roberts, Donaldson, and Coxe, 487). Whether the account is of any historical value is **unlikely, but what we do know is that the Corinthians said of Paul, "His letters were weighty and powerful, but *his physical presence is weak*" (2 Cor. 10:10, emphasis mine)**. In other words, he was more like **George Castanza than LeBron James!**

**While his bodily presence may have been unimpressive, we see him in Acts enduring afflictions all over the Mediterranean world! How did Paul endure?** The same way he is telling Timothy to go on: by "the grace that is in Christ Jesus." **If Timothy, a fragile vessel, is going to last in Ephesus—the city with blatant heresy, widespread disbelief, and an overall difficult church—it will be by the strength of Jesus.**

**How can we endure?** We have the same source. "Be strengthened *by the Lord* and by His vast strength" (Eph. 6:10, emphasis mine). **Our strength is not in how long we have been Christians, how much we know about the Bible, or in how long we have been in ministry. Our strength, this very moment, is in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

**Our strength is derived from our union with Jesus and is supercharged by our daily communion with Jesus.**

If you find yourself desperate for strength, you are in a good place. You are a great candidate for grace. You are in the number of those faithful servants in **Hebrews 11** who "**were made strong out of weakness**" (Heb. 11:34, ESV). Perhaps you are dealing with

- **Wayward children,**
- **Fatigue,**
- **Discouragement,**
- **Betrayal, or**
- **Illness.**

My friend, remember that there is a fountain of grace in Jesus. Join the prayer of Jehoshaphat who confessed, **“For we are powerless before this vast number that comes to fight against us. We do not know what to do, but we look to You”** (2 Chron. 20:12). So, if you are looking for strength to endure in the midst of hardship and suffering, look in the right place and to the right person: Jesus.

- Exodus 15:2
- Nehemiah 8:10 – *“Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”*
- **Isaiah 40:28-31**
- 1 Peter 4:10-11

**Christians who make an eternal difference in this world are those who have learned to rely upon God’s strength, not their own.** David Livingstone once commented on all the work that Charles Spurgeon would do in a typical day (and Livingstone was no sluggard!). He asked the prince of preachers how he could do it all. Spurgeon said, **“You have forgotten, there are two of us”** God’s presence in us supplies what we need to endure.

### **How do we experience this strength?**

- **Realize what you already possess** as a Christian (2 Peter 1:3). Piper, **“Fight like a victor, not a victim.”**
- **Seek the Father in prayer**, asking for him to “strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being” (**Eph. 3:16**).
- **Meditate on God’s Word**. Paul opens many of his letters by saying, **“Grace to you.”** When you open the Bible, there is grace coming to you – through personal devotion, hearing the Word read and preached, and singing it. Meditate on the gospel daily because you never outgrow your need for it. Paul concluded his letter to the Romans saying, **“Now to Him who has power to strengthen you according to my gospel”** (**Rom. 16:25**, emphasis mine). Go to the gospel daily and find strength.

### **CHALLENGE #2: PASS ON THE GOSPEL (2:2)**

Paul picks up the idea previously explained in **1:13-14**, that is, **guarding the gospel, only now it is taken to the next step of passing it on to others**. Paul notes **four stages** of this gospel hand off.

**First, Christ gave this message to Paul (1:12)**. Paul did not make up this message (Gal. 1:11-12); he was given this message. It was entrusted to him through divine revelation, not human invention.

**Second, Paul passed on the good deposit to Timothy**. He says that this message is **“what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses” (2:2a)**. **This message was the basic message Paul taught publicly in churches everywhere.**

- In Stott’s words, this phrase refers to **“the totality of Paul’s instruction over the years ... not a secret tradition handed on privately to Timothy (as the Gnostics were claiming) ... but a public instruction, whose truth was guaranteed by the many witnesses who heard it and who could therefore check Timothy’s teaching against the apostle’s” (Stott, 50-51)**.
- What Timothy heard was what Timothy was to now speak. This is the same charge for every teacher; keep passing on apostolic doctrine. This is real apostolic succession.

**Third, Timothy was to entrust the message to other men**. The word “commit” (2:2b) **is the same word that Jesus used when he cried out from the cross, “into your hands I entrust [or commit] my spirit” (Luke 23:46)**. Just as the Son knew his life was safe in the Father’s hands, so Timothy was to put the gospel into safe hands. Such men possess two essential qualifications.

(1) **They must be “faithful men,”** and (2) **They must be “able to teach” (2b)**. These two qualifications speak directly of the life of pastors who are called to be men of godly character and have the ability to teach (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 4:16). **Despite the large number of defectors in Asia, apparently there were still a few faithful men in Timothy’s sphere of influence**, and he is called to invest in them intentionally.

**Finally, Timothy is to entrust the message to faithful men so that they can “teach others also” (2b)**. Think about it. **Paul’s message went from a hole in the ground in Rome to where I am writing from in North**

Carolina roughly 2,000 years later! How did that happen? Simple – some faithful men practiced 2 Timothy 2:2. They did not let the gospel die with them.

Every Christian leader needs to be looking for some faithful believers who can do the same. As Phil Jenson says, we need a category of men that he calls “**Blokes Worth Watching**” (Dennis, 230). Could anything be more important than passing on the message of salvation to qualified teachers?

Timothy is charged later in this letter to “teach” (2:24, 4:2) and “preach” (4:2, ESV). We understand the importance of public teaching and preaching to both believers and unbelievers. But this exhortation to “commit to faithful men” seems to be a third type of instruction. It is more personal and intimate. It is closer to mentoring, or what we sometimes call “discipleship.” **Whatever we call it, it is certainly true that one of the biggest weaknesses in the church today seems to be the absence of 2 Timothy 2:2 ministry.**

You could think of teaching like the **three types of golf clubs.** You have woods, irons, and a putter. The woods are big, showy, and impressive. That is like preaching publicly. You are able to cover a lot of ground, talking to lots of people. Then you have irons. They require finesse and accuracy. Irons are like classrooms or smaller groups, where you get feedback and dialogue. Then there is the putter! This is the club that poor golfers misunderstand and so often fail to practice! It is personal. It is for short distances. I liken it to this third way of teaching described in 2 Timothy 2:2. Which of the three clubs are more important? While you need all three clubs in your bag, my observation has been that many pastors have a pulpit ministry (a driver), and sometimes a classroom (irons), but few use their putter (mentoring a few “faithful men”). But good golfers remind poor golfers (like me) that “you drive for show and put for dough.”

An important lesson from the book of 2 Timothy is that we need all of our clubs. Every Christian is called to make disciples (use the putter). You need to be a **reproducer** of teaching not just a **receiver**. (cf., Heb. 5:12)

**What did Jesus do? Did he not pour his life into twelve?** Sure, he occasionally used his irons and driver too, on hillsides and in the

synagogues, **but Jesus was not building buildings. He was building men.** And these faithful men turned the world upside down.

**App:** Have you ever considered the fact that perhaps the greatest thing you might do with your life is pour into a future leader?

*Who will inherit your work? Who will continue your legacy? Will you even have an heir, not of your possessions, but your life and soul? Have you ever considered that your Sistine Chapel might not be a place or project but a person?*

Leonard Sweet

- **Pour into your kids (Psalm 78:4-8)**
- **Ladies, pour into other ladies (Titus 2)**
- **Men, invest in younger men.**

**Mark Matlock shows that one of the reasons high school students stick with it is that they have a mentor. Maybe you can do that.**

**Movies pick up on the importance of this, don't they? Ever noticed how many movies show this? Without the mentor (oracle, sage, priest, confidant), the hero could not grow and conquer.**

- A. **Miyagi**, Danielson
- B. **Morpheus** All he had to do was teach Neo to live outside of the Matrix, which he did, with lessons built within the construct.
- C. **Obi-Wan Kenobi**, gave Luke what every SciFi-loving kid wanted in the seventies: A lightsaber, a cause, and a ticket to outer space;
- D. **Yoda – the wise old sage;**
- E. **SEAN MAGUIRE** - Will Hunting, an orphan from Boston
- F. **Finding Forrester**
- G. **CHUBBS PETERSON – Happy Gilmore from hockey to golf**
- H. Gandalf is looked up to by men, hobbits, elves and dwarves alike (especially dwarves) and leads his bunch of merry men to Mordor, so young Frodo can drop his bit of bling in the big volcano.
- I. **MICKEY** saw potential in **Rocky Balboa** – where others saw a slack-jawed, knucklehead
- J. **Paul Newman, fast eddie – mentors Tom Cruise, color of money**



I am indebted to **Dr. Jim Shaddix** who lived out this verse while I was in school in New Orleans.

**My friend Joel also models this 2 Timothy 2:2.** He was a music minister for thirty-five years before he and his wife left for Ukraine at age 57! For nine years now, Joel has been training and equipping a handful of “faithful men” to plant churches in the former Soviet Union. When I first met him in Kiev in 2006, he said, “**This is the most meaningful ministry of my life.**” I think Joel discovered what many also discover: the joy of pouring into younger leaders who will teach others. This ministry reinvigorated my older brother and I find great hope knowing that when I am 65, I too may find such joy in ministry.

- **We need this all over the world!**
  - Pastors training pastors
  - Business men training business men

### **CHALLENGE #3: ENDURE FOR THE GOSPEL (2:3-7)**

To inspire Timothy for faithfulness in ministry, Paul uses three simple but powerful images: he soldier, the athlete, and the farmer. These are some of Paul’s favorite images, and he uses them elsewhere to illustrate various truths.

#### **#1: The Dedicated Soldier (3-4)**

Paul was familiar with Roman soldiers, since he was in prison more than once! He notes that a “good” soldier is known for **his focus** and **his willingness to suffer.**

He tells Timothy to “**endure hardship**” (2:3, NIV), not “get mad in hardship” or “quit in hardship” or “expect no hardship.”

Ministers often joke about how many times they have resigned on Monday morning!.. Bread truck... **instead of enduring constant criticism, unpredictable giving patterns, the burden of reconciling marriages, or the weekly pressure of sermon preparation – not to mention having your life threatened on the mission field!**

But Christ has not called us to a life of ease, but a life of endurance. By the grace that is in Jesus, **we're called to put a helmet on and stay in the battle until our commander says that the war is over!**

**Tertullian said in his *Address to Martyrs (what a title!): "No soldier comes to the war surrounded by luxuries, nor goes into action from a comfortable bedroom, but from the makeshift and narrow tent, where every kind of hardness and severity and unpleasantness is to be found."***

He adds in verse four that the good soldier **does not get "entangled in the concerns of civilian life; he seeks to please the recruiter"** (2:4). Soldiers live with the awareness that a war is going on.

- There is a sense of **concentration, austerity, self-denial, and disregard for trivial matters**. **Do you have this?**

Are there any **good things that are keeping you from doing the main things?** Are you entangled with stuff that is keeping you from making disciples among all nations?

- **Nehemiah** –I'm doing a good work, and I can't come down!

Later, Paul tells Timothy not to **"fight about words"** (2:14), to **"avoid irreverent, empty speech"** (2:16), and to **"flee from youthful passions"** (2:22). **What is it that is entangling you?** Politics? Money? Augustine said, **"The love of worldly possessions entangles the soul and keeps it from flying to God."**

Are you all tied up with greed, a quest for control, senseless controversies, or youthful passions? **Let your passion be singular: to please the one who enlisted you.**

## **#2: The Disciplined Athlete (2:5)**

Once again Paul draws on an analogy with which he was familiar. As a leather-worker (or tent-maker), Paul would have been around the Greek games often.

He does not point out a **particular sport**, but simply says “an athlete” to make his point about discipline. **What sports do you like?**

- o **Baseball (God's sport, thinking man's game); Bowling; basketball, team handball; boxing; hockey (I like the fights); tennis ( I like the grunting); golf; disc golf**
- o **I don't like curling – an angry wife invented that sport... to get a broom in a dude's hands.**

In every sport the athlete must compete “**according to the rules**” if he is to be “crowned.” To receive the evergreen wreath of the Greek games, **the athlete must avoid unfair tactics**. Perhaps if Paul were alive today he would have added, “athletes cannot use performance enhancing drugs” or “baseball pitchers cannot scuff the baseball.”

- o **... T-Ball – go to third first... some coaches break the rules in recruiting.**
- o **Many cheat; lie, abuse; bend the rules; manipulate;**

**Many want God's blessing but they aren't competing by the rules.** This is a call for **integrity**. Be a person of integrity even if it costs you personally. What are the rules? Marry a Christian; give; witness; pray.

**An athlete must also train**. He tells Timothy elsewhere, “train yourself in godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7b). There are no shortcuts in sports. It requires discipline.

- o **You can't take shortcuts. Everyone wants shortcuts. “Just eat mangos.” “Just take this pill and be skinny.” James, “Eating Frosted Flakes it makes you good in sports.” No, practice makes you good – discipline.**

**It is interesting that millions admire athletes, but few imitate them.** Many enjoy their performances, but few watch and attempt their training. **Have you ever seen announcers? They are in terrible shape; and they yell at guys who aren't fast!**

**If athletes can train and compete for trophies and men's applause, how much more should we train and sweat for that which is eternal!**

**We aren't earning merit. We are serving with passion and integrity because we love God. We do this in response to what he has done for us.**

### **#3: The Hard-Working Farmer (6)**

**Just as with soldiers and athletes, farmers cannot take any shortcuts either.** They must toil every day. The difference with this illustration is that farming, unlike athletics and sometimes the military, **is not glorious or exciting. The farmer is not applauded by fans or civilians. He does not call a press conference when he grows a big pumpkin!**

This is a good analogy for ministry. It involves sowing, planting, plowing, and monitoring. The farmer does not clock in and clock out. He gets up early, he works the field, he cares for the animals, and he shoots wolves! He is devoted to his work.

Paul adds that the hard-working farmer **deserves the first "share of the crops."** **The farmer gets to enjoy some of the fruit of his labor.**

- **This is the other side to farming and likewise ministry. There are tremendous blessings involved in watching people grow in holiness, seeing skeptics converted, and watching mission projects develop.**
- **Slow, careful, faithful ministry eventually produces because we reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7-8). Therefore, "we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up" (Gal. 6:9).**
  - **Judson, Carey, Boston**
- **If the farmer does not plow, he will not reap. Paul tells Timothy (and us) to "keep plowing."**

Paul concludes these examples by saying, "Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything." (2:7).

**Here is Bible Study 101!** Students of Scripture must “**consider**” God’s Word carefully in order to understand it. Students of Scripture should also study with this promise in view: “**the Lord will give you understanding in everything.**” **Do not be lazy in Bible study. Work hard and believe that God will help you uncover its truths.**

To be a great student of Scripture you need hard work and a heart of humility.

#### **CHALLENGE #4: REMEMBER THE HERO OF THE GOSPEL (2:8-13)**

In order to endure to the end, through the good seasons and difficult seasons, believers must **never lose sight of Jesus**. Paul says, “**Keep your attention on Jesus Christ**” (2:8).

At first glance, this may seem like an unnecessary statement. **How could you possibly forget him?** Stott reminds us, “**the human memory is notoriously fickle: it is possible to forget even one’s own name!**” (Stott, 61).

**Israel suffered from spiritual memory loss, which led them down a pitiful path of unfaithfulness and idolatry** (cf. Ps. 106:19-21).

Remembering Jesus involves keeping **both his person and work central**. Paul says that Christ is “**risen from the dead and descended from David.**” Here Paul affirms Christ’s person as fully *divine*, “**risen from the dead,**” (cf. Rom. 1:4) and **fully human**, “**descended from David.**” He also affirms Christ’s work. **Jesus has died in our place for our sins, has risen from the grave, has conquered our enemies, and now he sits at the Father’s right hand.**

**App:** When your tank is empty remember that the tomb is empty and the throne is occupied.

- **You can endure anything if you have sufficient motivation and power.**

- **A lofty vision of the person and work of Christ will keep us in the war, in the game, and on the farm.**

Paul adds that this is “**according to my gospel**” (2:8d). **His gospel was occupied with the hero of the gospel. And this was not a mere theological exercise for Paul. He personally experienced the transforming power of Jesus. He went from a terrorist to an evangelist! **It is for the hero of the gospel that he is suffering to the point of being bound like a criminal**” (2:9a). Paul encourages Timothy with the reminder that he is enduring suffering with this vision of Christ, even as he pens this letter.**

**Paul knows that the hero of the gospel is also powerful enough to keep his word advancing despite imprisonment. He says, “**But God’s message I not bound**” (2:9b).** Paul alluded earlier to the fact that God is the ultimate guardian of the gospel who will keep what was entrusted to Paul (1:12). **Not only will God preserve his Word, but he will also make sure that it is not bound.**

- **Opponents may chain the messengers, but the Sovereign Christ will make sure that they cannot chain the message.**

Further, Paul says that because of this gospel and the glory of Christ he will “endure all things for the elect: so that they also may obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory” (2:10). **The doctrine of election does not make Paul’s preaching of the gospel unnecessary, but rather it makes it essential! God has ordained that people find salvation in Christ by means of gospel presentation. Some people will believe if you will preach the gospel faithfully. And our gospel witness will require varying degrees of suffering, but we suffer that they may experience “eternal glory.”**

Finally, Paul quotes a **popular saying** in his time, which reinforces the idea that all believers must endure hardship. This trustworthy saying in 2 Timothy 2:11 may have been the **fragment of an early hymn**. It consists of **two pairs of sayings**, which are general truths of the Christian’s life.

**The first relates to those who endure faithfully, the second pair describes those who are unfaithful.**

- First, **“If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him”** (1:11b-12b). **The idea of dying with him to live with him probably refers to dying to self, as we take up our cross to follow Jesus. Jesus said that “whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me and the gospel will save it” (Mark 8:35).** This view certainly fits the context, in which Paul is telling Timothy to lay down his comfort for Christ and his gospel. But not just for Timothy. All believers are called to a life of dying. If we do endure, then, as Paul quotes from the hymn, **“we will also reign” with Christ. Only if we share in Christ’s sufferings now will we reign later.**
  
- **The next pair of statements describes the awful picture of denying Christ, proving faithless, “if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself”** (12b-13).
  - **This first statement also seems to echo the teaching of Jesus in the context of a discourse on persecution: “But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven”** (Matt. 10:33). The meaning of Paul’s statement in 2 Tim 2:12b, then, in light of this connection with Matthew 10, is clear: **we must not deny our Lord.**
  
  - But what about the next statement, **“if we are faithless, he remains faithful”** (2:13) – **how are we to understand this expression?**
  
- **Some take verse 13 to refer to the idea that even if we turn away from Jesus, he will not turn away from us** (Comfort)
  
- **Others find this to mean that if we are unfaithful, he remains faithful ... to his own *character*, which in this case would include rejecting the faithless.** (Warning)

- One group sees this verse as a word of *comfort*, the other as a word of *warning*.
- While it is certainly true that God is not fickle and his faithfulness is new every morning for believers who have moments, like Peter, of denying Christ, I do not think *that is what this hymn is saying*.
- I think the best way to understand this hymn (though I hold this position loosely) is to take it **as a warning** for those who persist in a state of faithlessness.
- These statements appear to be parallel, pointing in this direction, "If we deny him" is parallel to "if we are faithless," and "he also will deny us" is parallel to "he remains faithful." "He will deny us" helps us understand "he remains faithful"
- God is faithful not just to extend blessing to those with genuine faith, but also faithful to his warnings.

However one wishes to interpret this last phrase of the hymn, it is clear and wonderfully encouraging that **"he cannot deny himself"** (13b). God cannot act contrary to his nature; he is faithful; he is the God of mercy and justice. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever.

**Remember Jesus Christ!** Remember the one who conquered our enemies, is seated at the Father's right hand, and gives sufficient grace that we may endure hardship.

If we endure through him, we will reign with him. And when your faith ends in sight and you hear the Savior say, **"Well done," I promise you that you will not regret passing on the gospel and suffering for the gospel as a good soldier, a disciplined athlete, and a hard-working farmer.**

Now let's take the Lord's Supper as we **"do this in remembrance of him."**



